

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT Prisons and Concentration

25X1A6a

ORIGIN

25X1X6

DATE:

25X1X6

This document is hereby regraded to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
letter of 16 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence
Archivist of the United States.
Next Review Date: 10/10/83

INFO: 26
22 August 1947
PAGES 2
SUPPLEMENT

Prisons

1. Persons arrested in Bulgaria are held in prisons controlled by the militia, the Garrison Commander, or in the Central Jail of Sofia. Prisoners are generally maltreated and underfed in degrees varying with the particular jail.
2. Those who are arrested on any pretext by the Bulgarian militia are so strictly guarded that even their relatives do not learn of their whereabouts for months. During their cross-examination, the prisoners are given neither food nor drink, and they are severely tortured.
3. A prisoner who is held in custody by the Garrison Commander is, however, allowed to accept food brought by relatives who may know of his whereabouts. He is held in solitary confinement until the investigation of his case is completed, and he is neither cross-examined nor tortured.
4. The Central Jail of Sofia has a club devoted to Communist propaganda called "Kulturno-Prosveten-Kruzok" (Cultural and Educational Club), which is well supplied with literature designed to convert the prisoners to Communism. Among the high-ranking prisoners housed here at present are:

General Ayranov - former chief of the Bulgarian Air Force, condemned to penal servitude for life.

Dimitar Gichev - leader of the left wing of the Agrarian Party after the coup d'etat; Minister of Agriculture, 1931, Minister of Commerce, 1933. Sentenced to year's imprisonment, October 1937. Elected to Sobranje, 1938.

Vergil Denlof

Constantine Muradief

Machekarof - former Bulgarian Ambassador at Zagreb

Lontof - former Bulgarian Press Attache at Zagreb

Marinof - former Inspector of Bulgarian Cavalry

Many former judges and public prosecutors are also being held here.

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Document No. 25X1A6a
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DDI Memo, 4 Apr 77

Auth: EDA REG. 77/1763

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5. Relatives of those sentenced to five year terms are allowed to visit the prisoners for ten minutes once a week; those sentenced to ten year terms receive their relatives once a fortnight; and those sentenced to 15 year or life terms receive their relatives only once a month. Visitors stand behind the iron bars of the prison, and are permitted to bring food.

Concentration Camps

6. The Dupnitsa, Rositsa Dam, and Bogdanofdol camps follow the Nazi pattern. Prisoners are tortured and subjected to starvation diets. No camp affords adequate sanitation.
7. The Dupnitsa Camp is under the direction of Yordan Neshev, and Captain Gelshanof, a Communist, is the Commander of the Guards. The camp consists of three or four quarters and houses about 2,000 prisoners who work at railway construction. The part of the camp situated in the northeast of the town of Dupnitsa on the left bank of the Struma river holds 400 political prisoners. This part of the camp is heavily guarded and communication with prisoners is virtually impossible. If a passer-by happens to talk to a prisoner, he is arrested immediately and subjected to a detailed cross-examination, and the prisoner is flogged and tortured.
8. The commander of the Rositsa Dam Camp is a Jew named Menahem Kohen. The assistant commander of the Guards is Stephan, a Communist from Sofia. Prisoners are lodged in brick pavillions accommodating 250 men each, and are guarded by 120 militia soldiers. Here 2,000 political prisoners are held, all condemned to forced labor on the dam. Among these prisoners are five Turkish teachers who were brought from the neighborhood of Shumen. Prisoners divulging details of the dam are subject to death penalty. It is possible, however, to obtain a release from this prison by turning Communist.
9. The Bogdanofdol Camp located about eight kilometers from Pernik probably holds 400 political prisoners who are working in the Pernik mines. Those Bulgarian students who returned from Germany after completing their studies, and the followers of Professor Cankov are imprisoned here. No visitors are allowed, and while prisoners are, technically, allowed to correspond with relatives, this is never actualized.

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